tuber, Coleus coffini, which Europeans call oussounifing or fabirama, and which may replace potatoes in a pinch, are cultivated in the soils most propitious to them.

The precious karite /shea/ tree (Butyrospermum parkii) grows in most fields; its fruit, prized for its cool and slightly sweet flesh, contains a pit which yields karite butter, the fat most widely used in cooking and to make soap. Around the villages, and sometimes even within them, the néré /locust bean/ tree (Parkia africana) produces elongated pods; its bark, mashed in water, yields a paste that is used to harden the floors of the huts. Its flour makes a cooling drink when mixed in water, and it may also be eaten; its seeds /8/ are used to make kalro /kalre in the original/, the soumbara of the Bambara, an ingredient /made from locust beans, néré/ of all carefully prepared sauces. The doubalé and silk-cotton or kapokiero trees spread their shade over the weavers, numerous among the Mossi, and over the talkers who are even more. Bamboo grows well in the damp southern regions, and the palm oil tree is occasionally found. The caoutchouc liana, however, has not yet been introduced.

Small chickens run in all directions through the villages, along with domesticated guinea hens. Everywhere in the bush near the huts, little boys herd goats and sheep; this is the task of youngsters here at the age when their contemporaries among us /in France/ begin to learn the alphabet. The most common sheep and goats are small in size. The sheep have short hair. Sometimes, especially in the larger villages where markets are held, goats and sheep are to be seen with long legs and long, curled horns. They are imported from the northeast and fattened to be sold as butcher's meat. The height of fashion for the wife or a prosperous naba is to be followed by a Touareg /Tuareg/ sheep, well washed and very white. It is fed on millet leftovers and bean mush, and its mistress often presents it with a bit of salt to lick. In short, it is well cared for and agreeably fat; on some important feast day, it will embellish the menu.

The huts are usually guarded by very commonplace dogs, often ill-tempered, but cowardly. A stick is enough to drive them away. They are mostly used in the hunt, the great Mossi pastime during the dry season. Domesticated ducks are sometimes found in nabas' households, as well as pigeons, but these birds are not widespread and not within the reach of everyone. Finally, almost every group of huts has cats which belong to the women and which are difficult

852 [302] shaved strips on top of the head, while the sides are shaved similarly in semi-circular strips. On the seventh day, people who were previously circumcised bring chickens to sacrifice to the spirits of the paths so that all will go well, but the newly circumcised take no part in the proceedings. The children wash, oil themselves, and put on their beautiful clothes. Everything is brand new, the breechcloth, the 852 292 301 trousers, the shirt, the blanket, and the headgear. The belt is adorned with a knife in a leather sheath and with a needle case which has at the end a tuft of leather strips with cowries attached to them. They [776] hold a cow's tail, also adorned with cowries, to drive off the scheuyan spirits who dislike little rascals and people who dress too well. Both wrists are adorned with copper bracelets. Needless to say, this flashy new outfit with its cowries that clang like bells lures the eye and bewitches the young boys, who decide to be circumcised at the first opportunity so they too may eat well and wear beautiful clothes.

852 [48] /44/ The circumcised boys continue to walk bent over, leaning on their sticks, but their crude staff is replaced with two sticks decorated with burnt designs and tied together. They no longer wear a tail. They go to greet the chiefs, and they thank those who have given them gifts. They walk to the sound of the large drum, since the bindré is forbidden at circumcision ceremonies, and sing plaintive chants to the spirits. They parade in the marketplace and display their clothes in the villages. They dance before the chiefs, and their dances are very [535] graceful indeed. They dance in unison to the beat of the drum, making the same gestures all together or two by two, varying the figures in accordance with the beat. After seven days the festivities are over, and they all return to their families and take up everyday life as though nothing had happened.

We shall now study this everyday life.

/45/ BOOK III. DAILY WORK AND TRADES

Chapter 1. Occupations of a Mossi

● 221 241 The Mossi are essentially cultivators, and it may be said that no Mossi who works at a trade will fail to cultivate his fields when the

221 241 rains come, laying aside any other task no matter what his profession may be. The Mossi year is divided as described below, and year follows year without bringing any changes in this monotonous existence.

The rainy season from May to October is the time of the hard labor of cultivation, and all Mossi devote themselves fully to the task. Men, women, and children are always in the fields. They cut down the [805] thorn bushes at the beginning of May, as soon as the Pleiades appear on the horizon and the baobabs begin to burgeon. This is spring (sigu). For this work they use a small hatchet, a few centimeters wide, with a short, easily grasped handle, and a forked stick to fold back the thorny branches so they may more conveniently be cut at the base. The branches are piled in heaps and burned one evening as soon as they are dry. When the first copious rains fall, usually in June, the natives immediately sow the small white millet used to make sarabo, the staple of the aboriginal diet, and the large red millet or sorghum from which millet beer is made.

Sowing is regarded as one of the most laborious tasks, because it forces the sower to remain bent so as not to lose sight of the stretch already covered. The natives sow with an old worn-out hoe, with which they strike the ground twice in order to make a small hole. The grain is carried in a gourd held by a string to the left hand; this leaves the fingers free to seize a few grains which are dropped into the hole. A little soil is then replaced by the hoe. When the rain has soaked the ground more thoroughly and the millet has begun to grow, maize is sowed around the huts.

Following the first weeding of the fields, beans are sowed among the shoots of small millet, and cotton among those of large red millet or near the watercourses. The ground is then prepared to sow rice, peanuts, and native peas. Meanwhile the fields must be hoed incessantly to remove the weeds that would smother the young millet shoots. If the rain is too abundant at the end of June, the cultivators are often overwhelmed with work, and they complain that it has become impossible to keep their fields clean. Gombo (okra) and all the condiments for making sauce, peppers, tomatoes, etc., are planted around the maize fields, near the huts, along with /46/ native hemp and all sorts of gourd plants. In favorable soil, hence only in certain areas, fabirama, manioc, and yams are cultivated in a special manner.

221 235 Those who raise chicks take them along to the fields in an oblong cage of plaited straw or willow. When they get to the spot where

221 they will be working, they open the door of the cage and the mother
235 hen comes out. She is tied to the basket with a string, and the chicks run around her. If their master finds a good termite nest, he takes it to his little charges and breaks it in two. In the evening he puts the hen and chicks back into the basket and carries it home suspended from his shoulder.

[805] The heavy rains fall in July and August. This is summer (seoro).
221 Whenever the ground is not too soggy, everybody runs to the fields at
241 dawn and works until nightfall. One or two women stay home to pre-
476 pare food for the laborers, whose strength must be maintained for all this hard work. No one may rest. Only the sick and the helpless old people stay home, and even they are put to work, looking after the babies. This is the time when wealthy people call friends to their aid. The owner of a vast field has every member of the village notified — especially the young men, those who own some obligation toward him, those who have an eye on his daughters — that on a certain date he will be weeding his field, and at dawn of that day everyone gathers and labors while the drums spur them on. On another occasion, this man in turn will help those who have worked for him. This practice of mutual aid is very advantageous because a field overgrown with weeds is cleaned in a single day, but it becomes onerous when people must appeal to their neighbors several times in the course of a season.

221 The heavy rains stop in August or September, the maize is ripe,
241 and feasting begins. Roasted corn ears are a prized tidbit, especially
262 when the kernels are still tender. There is one kind of maize, faintly sweet, which when sautéed in butter recalls our garden peas. Everywhere the children and even the elders feast on maize; everywhere people offer a visitor a few ears of maize, which are often roasted on the spot. When the maize harvest is completed, maize gruel, which recalls the famous Italian polenta, advantageously replaces millet mush and brings a pleasant change to the daily fare, especially since gombo is ripening and adds variety to the sauce as well. Bellies fill out, faces glow with health, and as a very natural sequence, hearts are flooded with joy. The end of the dry season may have been difficult because millet was running low; the winter tasks may have been laborious; but now everyone makes up for it. The harvested maize is replaced in the fields by tobacco; its seedlings were prepared as the harvest drew near.

[805] At the end of September or beginning of October, the large red millet is ripe. This is autumn (houpéla). Maize is now too tough

22/ for roasting and is replaced with green millet, eaten raw after being
24/ beaten with a small stick to remove the chaff. /47/ Certain kinds of
26 large millet are sweet and not too unpleasant to eat in this fashion.
Horses grow fat because millet is their staple food and they may eat
22/ as much as they please. Men also profit greatly, because beer brewed
24/ from new millet tastes much better than that made from old millet,
273 and when millet abounds, drink is never wanting. At this time rice is harvested, threshed on the threshing floors, and laid aside carefully for festive occasions.

At the end of October the rains have stopped almost completely.
22/ The beans are gathered and laid out in the fields on millet stalks or
24/ on séko held up from the ground by forked stakes to keep the termites from eating them, or the beans may be brought home and tossed on the séko which serve as shelters in front of the soukala. Now is the time to harvest the small millet, which is dry. The millet stalks are severed at ground level by the men and laid out with all heads oriented in the same direction to facilitate the work of the women, who cut off the heads and gather them in heaps. When the millet has been cut, the women fill their baskets. The largest containers are used for the occasion, and each woman uses her ingenuity to pile the millet as high as possible over her basket, using the longest ears or bean stems as supports, like the Zouaves who vie for the tallest pack. Should the line of women on their way back to the village meet a man known for his generosity, they sing, cry out, and surround him until he throws them a few handfuls of cowries to buy a jar of beer.

22/ As they near the threshing floor their cries get louder, and each
24/ woman comes to the granary and hands her basket to the man who
25/ stands there. These granaries are very crudely built and consist basi-
343 cally of sticks driven into the ground in a circle to hold up a séko which is wrapped around them. The floor is made up of another séko, usually resting on the ground but sometimes raised on stones or forked sticks to avoid termites. This is where the millet is placed prior to threshing. The granaries stand around the threshing floor of beaten earth, which is located 100 or 200 meters from the village, sometimes even farther. Thieves are no important threat. They may cut
674 down millet when it stands in the bush, but they rarely steal millet already stored. Only goats, sheep, and guinea hens are to be feared, and they are kept away from the granaries by thorns.

22/ As soon as these heavier tasks are over, everyone digs up peanuts
24/ and peas. The whole family gathers under the shade of a tree, and

221 241 the men bring bunches of peanuts. While nibbling on the green nuts and talking, they all separate the pods from the leaves. The latter [231] are carefully set aside along with the bean leaves. They make excellent fodder for the horses during the dry season, when the sun has burned off all the grass in the bush.

221 241 356 857 By November harvesting is completed. The sun has already dried out the grass, and the time has come to cut straw for séko and roofing. /48/ This task is usually reserved for children and servants (dakonré). The head of the household tells each one of them the number of straw bundles he is to cut, and every morning the children set off in groups, a sickle on their shoulders. They look for straw on the banks of the watercourses and return when the sun begins to scorch. This marks the end of the working day, and there is nothing to do now but rest. The dry season is indeed a time of rest, and from November to May there are no pressing tasks.

[805] 221 241 [372] 476 It gets cold in December. This is winter (sapolro). The natives gather at dawn around fires of millet stalks, twigs, or straw; anything combustible serves. Every newcomer must contribute an armful; it is the price of admission to a seat near the fire. At the end of December all the straw for roofing has been stored, and then the small millet is threshed. Every inhabitant of the village has the use of the threshing floor in turn. He notifies his friends and acquaintances as he did when he weeded his field. The millet beer is ready, and on the previous day the women have covered the area with cow dung diluted in water to harden the floor. At dawn the friends arrive, and the millet is removed from the granary and spread out on the floor. This is done with the help of millet stalks tied together in bundles and dragged along the ground with ropes while a man bears down upon them. The flail is merely a stick cut in the bush, a tree branch shaped in such a way that the part which is held in the hand is rather thin and flexible, while the part which is used for threshing is quite thick and forms an obtuse angle with the part in the hand. The boys line up in a row, with the tots at either end; the drummers stand before or behind them; and the flails fall with the beat, crushing the ears of millet and separating the very dry grain from the stalks. All the while the old men sit in the shade of the granaries, talking, smoking, and sewing clothes. When the threshers get to the end of the floor, they retrace their steps and rest, while the old men gather with straw brooms the grain which has been scattered outside the pile.

221 After a few hours when the millet has been sufficiently threshed,
241 the emptied and broken husks are swept to the side. The grain is
476 gathered in a heap, and a strong fellow tosses it into the air with a
788 wooden shovel to separate the chaff from the good grain, which is put in a heap. When all the grain has thus been winnowed, it is surrounded with a ring of ashes to protect it against evil spirits. Then one of the threshers, who is not a member of the family, puts some millet in a gourd and sprinkles it with water. He proceeds to throw it by the handful onto the millet pile, saying: "So-and-So fears rain," mentioning the name of the owner of the harvest and the name of every member of his family. He ends by saying: "When we are finished weeding, let the drought come. When we are finished planting, let the heavy rains come." If the owner of a horse is present, he receives a gourd of millet for his mount. Each of the elders also takes some for his chicken. If this ceremony is not carried out, the millet may not be used as seed the following year.

221 /49/ The women come with their baskets; a man takes one of the
251 brooms and sinks it into the millet heap in various places; then the
[482] men fill the baskets and help the women place them on their heads. At the house the millet is unloaded into granaries made of clay mixed with finely cut straw. These granaries have the shape of large jars 1.50 meters high; they usually rest on large stones, and they are
[343] smoked out beforehand to get rid of termites. They are closed with a lid of the same material and covered with a small thatch roof as a protection against rain, for they usually stand in the open air in the inner courtyard. Millet beer is brought and drunk on the spot while the millet is being winnowed. Sometimes the festivities end with dancing, and then everyone goes home, to begin again another day. The month of January goes by in this fashion.

221 February, March, and April are vacation months, months for hunting and fishing.

224 Actually no Mossi is a hunter, yet all Mossi are hunters to some
411 degree. Since the French occupation, men armed with very primitive flint guns are sometimes seen on the fringes of the heavy bush which borders the Volta and contains large game. These flint guns are so crude that they frequently burst and wound the man who recklessly
224 loaded it with too much powder. These natives know the bush thoroughly and are very helpful to the adventurers who wish to hunt koba, buffalo, elephant, leopard, or even lion, although the latter is to the

226 the sacrifices, these amphibians have no scruples about biting a foot or leg. However, the crocodiles in these ponds are seldom large enough to sever a limb.

In those places where the water is somewhat shallow and flows for some period of time, the bank dwellers make dams of tree branches intertwined with millet stalks. These are placed diagonally to the current and lead to a sort of funnel closed with a net. The fish follow the dam, enter the funnel, and get caught in the meshes of the net.

● 221 356 The major ceremonies also take place at this time of year. This is when the Day of the Dead is celebrated, when the koure is held. When the first gust of wind unroofs a few huts or at least indicates those that need a new covering, everyone sets down to the task. The thatch cut in December is used for the purpose. Before the soukala, [283] [857] children and youths knot blades of straw with strings of hemp and plait séko. They also go into the bush to cut down branches and to gather bark which serves to bind the branches together. When everything is ready, the head of the household calls his people and gathers a few neighbors. The roof is made and laid within a short morning. This task must be repeated every two years or so, and it is men's work entirely. At the beginning of winter, the villages take on a smart 221 new look. This is when people think of building a new hut, the man who has acquired a new wife, the child who has grown into a young man and who can no longer live with his mother, the man whose wealth has increased by a few head of cattle or a horse. The women fetch water, the children knead the mortar with their feet and carry to the mason the mud clods prepared by the old men. These tasks are not laborious, and they are accomplished with merrymaking.

Now the thorn bushes have grown back, the rains will soon fall again, and already a few gusts of wind herald the coming winter. The Pleiades have appeared on the horizon, and the baobabs are budding once more. It is necessary to take up the hoe again and to sow; this is a good thing, because the millet is running low in the granaries. The working cycle we have described must begin anew. And year follows year without bringing any major changes in the life of the common man.

λ [i.e., February-April. —Analyst]

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bush is included in the orderly universe which the Mossi have fabricated, it exists at the periphery and is a thing to be feared. The name of this unknown and unowned part of the bush is synonymous with fear. Dreams in which an individual sees frightening images are called "bush creeping up" (*weogo doore*) or "bush traps you" (*weogo n'yoko fo*). These phrases are also used to describe the emotional shock, the feeling of fear, elicited by the unexpected sight of a frightening object like a corpse or a lion.

Most important among the supernatural beings inhabiting the bush are the twin spirits (*kikirdisi*). Living in pairs or in larger groups, they inhabit the bush, caves, baobab trees, and certain dense thickets of underbrush. While specific details vary, it is generally conceded that they are small, about a foot tall, black like the Mossi, and of both sexes. Their social organization is like that of men: each group is ruled over by a twin spirit-chief (*Kikirdisi Naba*).

Twin children are always regarded as the emissaries of the twin spirits. Shortly after the birth of twins their mother takes a present of food to a place where the twin spirits are known to dwell. Leaving the gift and expressing her thanks, she also makes it clear to the twin spirits that if they have any sort of malicious intent in sending her their children they might as well take them back immediately, since she will tolerate no foolishness. If, through her new children, they plan to torment her, they should save their efforts and desist at once. While the twin spirits are frequently mischief-makers, they are more frivolous than malicious and essentially neither good nor evil. The death of newborn twins is accepted with relief, for it is believed certain that the twin spirits have been thwarted in their mischievous intent and have conceded defeat.

THE ECONOMIC AND CEREMONIAL CYCLE

A brief description of the economic cycle and the ceremonials which mark its phases will serve to illustrate the way the Mossi perceive their relationship to the forces of their natural, supernatural, and social milieux and the methods by which they seek to assure their well-being through control of these forces. The year is usually divided into twelve moons whose names refer either to the principal economic activity of the season or to a ceremonial which accompanies it.

The first moon of the Mossi year is called "Gambo" after the name of the village which celebrates its first rain-making ceremony (*Tengana*) at this time. Although the rains are still five or six months away, this ritual marks the beginning of the new economic cycle. Each household which possesses land controlled by the earth custodian sends one of its young girls with an offering of millet gruel to place at the altar of Tenga Wende, the terrestrial manifestation of the deity. The earth custodian advises

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Tenga Wende of the desire for a good growing year and gives each girl a small part of the wet earth near the shrine; this represents the now sanctified soul (*shiga*) and is placed under the granary from which the millet seeds for the new crop will be taken.

Then those who possess land controlled by the earth custodian organise a hunt for his benefit. The following day, the earth custodian visits each lineage which possesses fields in areas of the bush under his custodianship. He is given calabashes filled with millet gruel, which he pours as a libation on the earth, asking Tenga Wende to grant good health, heavy rains, and a successful harvest to the household. As the libation is poured, the women try to catch a little in their own calabashes of gruel, which they then pour as their sacrifice. Because the millet from the granaries of good harvests is lucky, other women want to try to catch a little of it in their own offerings; thus the libations spill from one calabash into another as they fall on the earth.

The second moon is called "Bega" after the ceremonial which coincides with the first labor in the fields, the clearing and burning which precedes planting. After making a sacrifice at his own altar, the earth custodian goes to the residence of the neighboring priest (*Boga*) specifically charged with the propitiation of the vegetal manifestation of the deity. This visit symbolizes the interdependent relationship of the two priests and the supernatural powers which they control. The *Boga* then repeats the libations made during the previous ritual, but this time the offerings of millet gruel are made to Tido Wende, the force which gives life to the plants, rather than to the earth.

A sacrifice to Pogo Wende, the specific manifestation of Tenga Wende which guards a farmer's fields, is usually made after they have been cleared and prepared for planting. Either before or after the sowing of the first seeds, the farmer asks the earth custodian to sacrifice a sheep or a goat to the field deity, requesting good health, heavy rains, and a rich harvest. This sacrifice (*Pogo Mande*) is the final aspect of the ceremonial preparations for the new economic cycle. It is designed to enlist the benevolence not only of Pogo Wende but also of the twin spirits which inhabit the field. If the twins are well disposed toward the farmer, they will protect the soul (*ki shiga*) of his millet stand from the twin spirits from neighboring fields who might try to steal it. Like the ancestral spirits, the twin spirits send a high wind into a field, blowing the ripening grains from the stalk and liberating their "souls" (*shiise*), which are then captured to enrich the spirits' own fields.

The third moon of the year is called "Cundiba Bega." The fourth, which usually corresponds with the European month of June, is called "unaccompanied" (Quizale), referring to the fact that no ceremonial is observed during its phase. The hard work in the fields is begun at this

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time. "Waraga," which means "first cultivation," is the name given to the fifth. The sixth, which appears in early September or late August, is called "Baca," meaning "second cultivation."

If the millet is not yet ripe for harvest at the appearance of the seventh moon, it is also called "Baca," since the work of cultivation must continue. This choice rests with the chief of the village of Room. The entire Mossi kingdom waits for his decision to know whether the ceremonial cycle called "Basga," which closes the economic year, is to begin or whether the harvest and its attendant ceremonies are to be put off for another month. Just behind his residence is a sacred millet field whose grains, as they mature, contain an aspect of the souls (*riim shiise*) of the dead kings of the Yatenga. When the millet in this field is ready to be cut, the next moon to appear is called "Yalem," and the ceremonial cycle which closes the economic year is begun. In the early days of the Yatenga dynasty millet from this field was used to prepare a sacrificial gruel to propitiate the deceased rulers of the newly established kingdom. When it is cut today, a first portion is taken to the altar at Room dedicated to the souls of these early kings. Two other bundles of millet are prepared from the same field. One is sent to the *Yatenga Naba* at Ouahigouya, who is the living descendant of the dead kings. The other is sent to the village of Gourcy, the former capital and the first residence of the founder of the Yatenga dynasty, Naba Yadiga.

The emissaries to the two political centers are accompanied by young people who break off stalks of millet from the fields along their way, adding these to the bundles of grain so as to include all of the farmers of the Yatenga in this offering which symbolizes the dependence of the Mossi on the benevolence of the souls of the dead kings and their living descendant. The millet taken to Ouahigouya is sacrificed at the palace altar of the former rulers. Part of the millet sent to Gourcy is sacrificed at the altar of the spirits of the former village chiefs (*nakom shiise*); the other part is sacrificed at the shrine of the former kings. At Ouahigouya and Gourcy a portion of each sacrificial offering of millet is returned to Room with stalks from the local crop at each place. These are used to make a final sacrifice symbolizing the interdependent relationship of Mossi religious, economic, and political organizations. The ceremonial cycle serves to demonstrate the reliance of the people on the benevolence of the spirits of their former kings for their social, economic, and supernatural well-being.

A ceremony called "Kom Filiga" follows. Meaning "water thanksgiving," it is the occasion for thanking the Mossi ruler, the *Yatenga Naba*, for the wise direction of affairs which has permitted the farmers to cultivate their fields in peace. All village and canton chiefs travel to Ouahigouya to salute their king and rededicate themselves to his service.

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The next moon, called "Tido," is the occasion for a ceremony thanking Wennam, through his terrestrial and vegetal manifestations, for his support during the growing season and for the rich harvests that have been received. Though it is directed by the custodians of the earth, it is their auxiliaries, the Bogaba, who officiate and who sacrifice at the altars to Tido Wende. After they have finished, others may offer a chicken as thanks for successful harvests or for the birth of a child.

At the appearance of the next moon the ceremony called "Filiga" is celebrated, thanking the ancestors of each lineage for their protection during the hard months of the rainy season. The initial sacrifices are made by the village chief both at the shrine to the spirits of the former chiefs and at the ancestral shrine of his lineage. Because their offerings are made to powerful spirits, it is wiser not to refer directly to them by name. They are called *Kikirigó Na Maore*, which means "twin dance." The twin spirits, like the ancestral spirits (*kiemse*), give children. Thus, through indirection a "charged" word is avoided by calling the sacrifice after an analogous but less powerful force. The specific purpose of the first sacrifice is to ask the protection and the assistance of the spirits of the former chiefs during the dangerous period which is to follow. The ancestral spirits of the villagers are then propitiated, and individuals who fail to perform the sacrifices properly may be punished by their ancestors. It is also believed that the ancestors may try to call some of the members of the lineage to join them at this time.

The sacrifices are made by the children of the daughters of the lineage (*Yasenamba*), whose permissive relationship with their mother's kinsmen is paralleled by their relationship to the ancestral spirits of their lineage. The lineage head presents the first chicken for sacrifice. Its throat is slowly cut as it is offered to the "twin" (*kikirigo*), as the "first ancestor" of the lineage is called—again through indirection, for even if the name of the first ancestor were known, it would be presumptuous of his descendants to call him by name. A chicken is then sacrificed to the "old ancestors" of the great-grandfather's generation, to the ancestors of the grandfather's generation, and to those of the fathers' generation who are deceased. As each chicken's throat is cut, the ancestors are thanked for their protection throughout the rainy season and requested to continue to look out for the welfare of their descendants during the months of the dry season which follow. Other men of the lineage may then give chickens to be sacrificed.

The final aspect of the ritual closing of the economic year is the ceremony called "Na Poosum," or "chief's salutation." It is essentially a social occasion. The homage to the central political authority made at Kom Filiga is now complemented on the village level. The elders of each lineage go to the village chief with presents of millet and assurances of

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their continued reliance upon his political power and intercession with his noble ancestors, in order that the village may enjoy peace through the coming months of the dry season and early rains at the beginning of the next economic cycle.

With this observance all of the sources of power—both social and supernatural—upon which the Mossis' well-being is dependent have been thanked for their support throughout the year just ended and have been encouraged, by the generosity of their supplicants, to continue their benevolence for the year to come. The Mossi understand the nature of these forces and the manner in which they can be controlled. They know them as manifestations of a deity who will reward their observance of ceremonial obligations with the soft winds and heavy rains that bring a rich harvest. The individual is intellectually and emotionally absorbed in maintaining a balance in his relationship to a world he understands. His efforts to maintain this balance are occasionally frustrated by sorcery or the contrary will of his deity, but he enjoys, nonetheless, a very real security.

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENTS AT THE NIGER IRRIGATION PROJECT

Given the nature of these interrelationships between the organization of economic activity and the social and religious institutions of their culture, the adjustment of the Mossi who have been resettled at the Niger Irrigation Project has implications which go beyond mere technological adaptation. The settlers must, in fact, adjust to a totally changed cultural setting.

Arriving at the Niger project, they fail to find the institutions upon which they have always depended for their security; they find instead a natural environment governed by forces they do not know. Their water supply is no longer dependent on the supernatural controls of the earth custodians but comes from a dam built by Europeans. They are socially isolated from their kinsmen and their ancestral spirits in the Yatenga, and they derive little comfort from the presence of fellow Mossi with whom they have neither consanguineal nor affinal relationship.

Settlers were forcibly recruited for the Niger Irrigation Project until 1944, when forced labor was abolished throughout the French Union. Now a recruitment program brings Mossi families to the project each year; every family head receives a house, oxen, a plow, and a plot of land proportionate to the number of active workers accompanying him. Under the supervision of European agronomists, they apply modern methods to the production of rice and cotton. The project administration buys their crop for cash after deducting fees for seed, irrigation, mechanized cultivation, transportation, and processing. In theory, ten years of

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175 people have become Mossicized in language and culture, but it is
437 doubtful whether they would have taken the Hausa for Mossi. The
441 true Mossi may have played a minor role in the caravan trade, but I am certain that they took part in it and that they did so before the French conquest of their country.

175 There is little doubt that the Mossi traded with the caravans that
437 passed *through* their country. Crozat, who visited Moro Naba Wobogo
439 six years before the conquest, reported that the king

[43] ... appeared to have had some business relations with white merchants who came up to Salaga every dry season. He sent horses to them in exchange for silver. He claims that he had no reasons to be pleased with their integrity and that the silver which they sent to him contained plenty of copper. It happens also that traders may come as far as Wagadougou, bringing merchandise of German origin. There was one of them on hand during my stay at Wagadougou. I was told that he was an important marabout, a shereef, perhaps an Arab or a Moor, for I was assured that he was very light in color. As was repeated to me several times, his relations with the king were limited to the solemn greetings on Fridays. He has never entered the royal hut in spite of being an important marabout. He was at Wagadougou for about three and one-half months, but he was compelled to return to the coast since the merchandise which he had brought was exhausted. He spoke no Mossi. (Crozat 1891)

The caravans which passed through Mossi country were well organized but seemed to have lacked the regularity which was characteristic of the trans-Sahara ones. Those caravans coming from the north were apparently more regular since they had to await the coming of the great trans-Sahara caravans, which brought them salt and other
[366] valuable merchandise. Those coming from Salaga and points south
● [227] traveled at all times of the year, a fact which is corroborated by the voyage of Krauss, who arrived at the Bere market during August and the height of the Mossi planting season. This was a period of scarcity or "hungry period" as Krauss himself observed, and it is doubtful whether the Mossi had much to trade at this time. Nevertheless, caravaneers always found some trade goods at the larger Mossi market centers all through the year, even if only cloth and cotton bands.

[22] The main season for external trade in Mossi country came after the harvest. In the words of Marc, who served there shortly after the conquest:

Towards the end of the rainy season, in September or October, the
[34] Yarse begin to assemble the livestock in order to leave for the south. In certain large commercial centers like Kaya, Pouitenga, Dakay, one finds
[422] around this period the owners of livestock: Mossi chiefs, Fulani or rich natives, who are ready to sell their animals. People also assemble sheep of

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territory. This report is substantiated by Barth. Marc adds that the caravaneers had

> . . . a considerable amount of incidental expenses. Ten thousand kolas called for two asses or four porters for whom it was necessary to provide food during close to two months. Formerly there had been a certain number of local exactions to pay each time that the caravans crossed a new country. Now there are taxes on the caravans in the Gold Coast and also in French territory. It is also necessary to pay for ferryman who transports the livestock across the Volta [River]. There are risks, and occasionally cattle, fatigued by the trip, arrive in such bad shape that they are sold more cheaply than they had cost. Finally, the realization of profits is often difficult, the kola market being, in the commercial centers of the Mossi, subject to considerable fluctuations at the time when the caravans return. (Marc 1909 : 174)[7]

Sometimes the caravaneers made extensive use of middlemen and did not realize all the profits. Marc, who was stationed at the customs post at Leo on the Mossi border with the Gold Coast, wrote:

> The livestock is bought upon arrival by interpreter-brokers, middlemen between the butchers and the meat merchants, to whom the caravaneers are practically forced to resort. These men buy all the kola nuts brought by the forest natives, and control the market prices . . . These interpréter-brokers apparently speculate on livestock in a most curious way. They have scouts who go out to meet the caravans, sometimes two days' march to the north. These scouts attempt to alarm the travellers with tendentious remarks, until they are willing to cede their herds at a low price. Some times, at the height of the buiiness season—that is, in January and February—the livestock prices may fluctuate by one hundred per cent within a few weeks. The Mande-Dioula vie in eloquence, the Yarse and Mossi in politeness, the Hausa in friendliness. In reality, there is here, an embryonic trading center, a veritable stock exchange, using extensively indigenous methods. ((Marc 1909 : 173)

According to most reports, all the larger market centers of Mossi country were like this.

Caravan centers, like all the lesser market centers in Mossi country, provided merchants not only with trading opportunities but also with occasions for conviviality after hectic days of travel. At Dakay south of Wagadougou, livestock traders found musicians, singers, and the most beautiful dancers in the country. And according to Marc, during the whole caravan season the market was abundantly furnished with beer (Marc 1909 : 175). But if the Mossi enjoyed themselves at

(7) Tauxier (1912 : 559) states that each porter was paid 35 francs for the thirty-five days of travels or at the rate of one franc per day. In addition a caravaneer spent about 300 cowries a day on food for each of his bearers.

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same as those traded in pre-European times. For example, my notes for March 22, 1956, record that five young men were transporting 50-kilogram sacks of onions on their bicycles for trade in Ghana. On March 23, the next day, I wrote the following: "This appears to be the season of increased trade and the donkey trains are passing to and from Wagadougou and the Yatenga to Po (a town on the Ghana-Voltaic Republic border) and Bolgatenga in northern Ghana. Very often the donkeys carry nothing down, and at other times they are loaded with beans, millet, cotton bands, onions, peanuts and other vegetable produce. On the return trip they are laden with kola nuts going northward. This afternoon I counted twenty-eight asses coming from Ghana and going towards Wagadougou. Eighteen of them were laden with kolas, and ten were carrying long pieces of scrap iron which I was told, were to be converted into hoes for use during the coming planting season."

There is also a steady trade in livestock between Mossi country and the southern lands but the height of this trade occurs just prior to Ramadan. Beginning from one month to one week before this important Moslem feast day, the roads of Mossi country are clogged with thousands of sheep and goats being driven south for the use of religious households in Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Cattle are also shipped during this period, but not in the same volume since they are most often used collectively by Moslem families too poor to have their own sheep or goat.

The total volume of trade between Mossi country and Ghana and the Ivory Coasts is difficult to ascertain since despite the existence of Customs Posts a great deal of contraband trading takes place. My notes for December 12, 1955, read *"Contraband":* Two customs men came into the village to complain to the district chief about the behavior of Naba, one of his village chiefs. This is what happened: About two days ago, two agents saw in the forests the tracks of some thirty-five asses (heavily laden as can be seen by the depth of the tracks) and the marks of a bicycle with new tires. The agents followed the tracks all day and rested during the night. Yesterday they had to interrupt their search when the bicycle of one of the agents broke down, and when they resumed the search later in the day they came across five asses laden with kola nuts inside the compound of a man in Naba's village. Since they were forbidden by law to go into the man's compound and seize the animals, they went to the village chief in an attempt to have him tell the man to put the animals outside so that they could be seized. This the village chief refused to do, stating that it was not his affair, and adding that the agents should have seized the animals in the forest. The agents, now helpless, came and

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o'clock in the morning to sell food to those migrants who have slept under the trees or in the deserted market place and who are going on towards Ghana or to Wagadougou. At about 8:00 or 9:00 A.M. the majority of the food-sellers leave for home, but some of them remain around all day to sell to those migrants who pass by in the few trucks which can travel during the heat of the day. The food sellers then return at about 5:00 P.M. because from this time until about 1:00 A.M. most of the trucks bearing migrants stop for water and to allow their passengers to eat and rest. The amount of money these women gross varies from day to day depending upon the amount of traffic and the time of year. During the off-season from June to October, when most of the migrants are home planting, a woman may make as little as ten francs per day. In contrast, at the beginning of the dry season when the young men are migrating in droves, the women may make as much as 100 francs a day, even though twenty or thirty women line the road at trucking centers. Many women welcome this opportunity to earn money because by so doing they are free to buy in the local markets the things they need.

MARKET

The Mossi have always conducted most of their commercial activities in market places even though some extra-market trading continually takes place. These markets were and are still divided into two main types: (1) those specializing in external trading, such as Pouitenga, Dakay, Kaya, Mane, Yako, La, Beloussa, Tema, Wagadougou; and (2) those specializing in internal commerce such as the markets in the villages and district centers. Of course, there is an overlap between the two types of markets in the sense that some people from the villages go to the larger markets to dispose of their commodities and, in turn, buy goods which they bring back for resale on the local level. Similarly, in former days some caravaneers visited the local markets to buy commodities and in the process disposed of their goods. However, the main pattern is for local commodities to filter into the large market centers through local markets, and for goods from these centers to filter back down to the local markets. The more goods and traders available, the more numerous and successful the markets are.

The Mossi do not appear to have any legends about the origin of markets in their country. When asked how and why markets first arose, they say that markets developed simply because people wanted to exchange goods with each other, or because the chiefs wanted markets in their own villages so that their people need not go to other districts. When one asks the Mossi directly, "What is a market?"